

Robert Cromie Looks at *Authors and Books*



• THE FACT THAT Allen Dulles was director of the C. I. A. may not have made him an authority on mythical spies, but his "Great Spy Stories from Fiction" [Giniger-Harper and Row, \$6.95] proves that it didn't hurt.

Dulles, who died in Washington earlier this year, chose 32 samples of the genre, many of them chapters from books. They include the work of such writers as Joseph Conrad, Rebecca West, Alexander Dumas, Baroness Orczy, Manning Coles, A. Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, Lawrence Sanders, Vladimir Nabokov, Eric Ambler, Arthur Koestler, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Helen MacInness, Samuel L. Clemens, Len Deighton, John Le Carré, Ian Fleming, W. Somerset Maugham, Graham Greene, and Virgil.



Allen Dulles

The departmental categories into which the anthologist fits the stories will give a clue to the contents: Told as it was [tales based on fact], cloak and bomb, mask and intrigue, "the dangerous German spy," the mysterious east, interlude between the wars, spit and image, deception ["The Trojan Horse," from "The Aeneid," is found here], brainwashing, some losers [Le Carré's Taylor, Fleming's Bond, and Maugham's Giulia Lazzari], gimmickry, and spoofs [which include "The Recruitment of Major Blenkinsop," by Sir Compton MacKenzie].

• DULLES, IN THE introduction, pays high tribute to his fellow workers in the espionage field:

"The statesman, the diplomat, and the scientist may be the decisive figures in the real history of our time, but from the point of view of fiction they are colorless compared with the spy. Usually older gentlemen of settled mien, they sit in offices and laboratories. But the spy has the muscle and the daring to take the place of the discarded hero of yore. He is the new-model musketeer, and his adventures are but newly furbished tussles between the Queen's men and the Cardinal's, the Crusaders and the Saracens, the cowboys and the Indians."

Dulles also apologizes for using so many excerpts from novels, explaining that "there is a great dearth of good short stories about spies and spying. It may be because espionage in fiction always depends upon a certain degree of complexity to be intriguing and it takes a good deal of exposition to set the wheels in motion."

HERE ARE SOME appetizers, which may tempt you to begin the Dulles' book, which may, in turn, persuade you to seek out the complete accounts from which his selections were made. All are opening lines:

"There was nothing in the least alarming about the appearance of Mr. Ludwig Miller."

"In the third week of November, in the year 1895, a dense yellow fog settled down upon London."

"General Golubkov and his wife already formed one team, one song, one cipher."

"On learning Major Blenkinsop's business the janitor almost hustled him into a waiting-room, where he remained until a furtive little man came in and looked at Blenkinsop as if he expected him to blow up."

One to keep.